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C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 001026

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DRL/MLGA - SICCADE, YETKEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/17/2019
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [AG](#) [IR](#)
SUBJECT: ALGERIA'S RESPONSE ON IRAN-BURMA-DPRK RESOLUTIONS

REF: A) ALGIERS 998 B) STATE 116268

Classified By: Ambassador David D. Pearce. Reasons: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (SBU) Pol-Econ Chief delivered reftel B points on the Iran/Burma/DPRK human rights resolutions to MFA Deputy Director for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Salima Abdelhak on November 17. Abdelhak said she had recently returned to Algiers after a four-year posting in Algeria's UN mission in New York, where she worked the Third Committee portfolio. She said Algeria would continue to oppose these resolutions and support no-action motions. Explaining Algeria's "principled" position for doing so, she asserted that previous resolutions had produced no results. The "confrontational, name and shame" approach would only cause the targeted countries to close themselves off further. Algeria instead supported an approach based on dialogue in the Human Rights Council, in the context of the Universal Periodic Review. Single country resolutions only served to compromise the UPR process and the HRC itself, which the United States had recently joined.

¶2. (SBU) Pol-Econ Chief replied that the USG was engaged seriously in the HRC and the UPR. However, none of the three countries in question had ever shown a willingness for serious dialogue on human rights, whether in the HRC or any other international forum. They preferred to maneuver on the procedural level to block criticism. The U.S. Administration agreed on the principle of dialogue. It had taken a new approach to Iran that embraced dialogue, both on nuclear non-proliferation and on human rights. The U.S. believed nevertheless that UN resolutions highlighting the special human rights conditions in Iran, Burma and the DPRK were needed to focus international attention on these unique human rights situations. The great majority of the European Union took the same position. The international community should have the opportunity to vote on these resolutions. The Iranian resolution was especially necessary in the aftermath of the regime's worsening record during and after the recent elections. Algeria could at least join the growing number of Arab countries that last year had abstained or been absent on these votes.

¶3. (SBU) Abdelhak appeared to listen intently, and took detailed notes. She said she would relay our points to the MFA Secretary General's office.

4 (C) Comment: Algeria has voted against the U.S. position on all three resolutions and associated no-action motions since they were first introduced. We believe it extremely unlikely Algeria will change its votes this year. We note, however, that this MFA official took serious note of our argument on dialogue and increasing USG and international community concern over the worsening internal situation in Iran following the recent elections.
PEARCE